



Rhode Island Department of Health | Men2B Role Model Training Program

Supported in part by the Abstinence Education Grant Program in the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau; Rhode Island State Family Life funds; and state and local in-kind contributions..

For more information, call the Family Health Information Line at 1-800-942-7434.

August 2004



Role Model Handbook

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Table of Contents

About the Men2B Role Model Training Program	2
Session 1: Being a Man, Being a Role Model	7
Session 2: Supporting Adolescent Development	13
Session 3: Communicating Well	19
Session 4: Setting Limits and Using Positive Discipline	24
Session 5: Reducing Mixed Messages about Sex, Drugs, and Violence	29
Session 6: Understanding Reproductive Health	34
Session 7: Addressing Abuse: What It Is, Its Effects, and Sources of Help	43
Session 8: Making Positive Health Choices	50

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Welcome to the Men2B Role Model Training Program

Men2B is a training program for men in Rhode Island. Men2B trains men to become positive role models to young men ages 9 to 17.

Being a teen is not easy.

Boys go through a lot of changes in their bodies and in their minds. They have a lot of mixed feelings. They have a hard time understanding the changes that are happening to them.

Most teens become healthy, responsible adults. But many teens struggle. And all teens face risks – like smoking, drinking, sex, and violence. The choices they make can affect them for the rest of their lives.

Boys and young men need positive male role models.

Role models can help boys stay away from these risks. Role models can help boys grow up healthy.

Boys need men they can look up to as examples and learn from. Boys need their fathers to play this role. But they also need other men to be positive role models. These men can be coaches, teachers, neighbors, uncles, and other men who are in their lives.

All men are role models.

It doesn't matter how old you are or what you've done in your life. It doesn't matter how successful you are. You can be a positive role model to the boys and young men you know.

Men2B helps men become positive role models.

We know it isn't easy to be a good role model. It takes some time and effort. Teens aren't always easy to talk to. Teens want independence from adults. And some adults feel out of touch with the world of teens.

Men2B will help you understand what it's like to be a teenager in today's world. You will learn about the problems that boys today are facing, and you will learn what you can do to help them.

Men2B is for all men.

Men2B is NOT a mentoring program, and will not match you with a boy to mentor. It will give you the tools and information you need to become a positive role model. How you use the tools and information is up to you.

Many men who complete this program use what they learn in their everyday lives. They use it with their families and with teens in their neighborhood.

Some men join mentoring programs. If you want to join a mentoring program, contact the Rhode Island Mentoring Partnership/Feinstein Mentor Network at 401-732-7700 or visit their website at www.rimentor.org.



About Men2B

The Men2B program started in 1997. It is run by the Rhode Island Department of Health. It is funded through a grant from Supported in part by the Abstinence Education Grant Program in the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau; Rhode Island State Family Life funds; and state and local in-kind contributions. So far, over 2,000 men have gone through Men2B.

Men2B Agencies

The Rhode Island Department of Health works with community agencies to run Men2B trainings. The person who sets up the training at each agency is called a site coordinator or a program coordinator. The program coordinator is probably the person you talked to when you signed up. That is the person you should talk to if you have questions about Men2B.

Here is a list of all Men2B agencies that run Men2B trainings:

- Child And Family Services of Newport County**
76 Hammarlund Way
Middletown, RI 02842
www.cfsnewport.org
Phone: 401-848-4133
- Diocese Of Providence – Project Hope/Proyecto Esperanza**
400 Dexter St.
Central Falls, RI 02863
www.dioceseofprovidence.org
Phone: 401-728-0515
- Retired Senior Volunteers Association, Inc. (RSVA)**
84 Social Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
Phone: 401-766-2300
- Urban League of Rhode Island**
246 Prairie Ave.
Providence, RI 02905
www.ulri.org
Phone: 401-351-5000

Men2B Trainings

Men2B trainings are held in different places such as neighborhood centers and community agencies.

If you know someone who wants to sign up for Men2B, tell him to call one of the program coordinators listed above. Or have him call the Family Health Information Line at 1-800-942-7434 (toll free in RI) or 401-222-5960 (out of state).

Men2B Trainers

Men2B trainers are experts on different topics. Some are experts working in community based agencies. Some are counselors, doctors, or graduate students. Others have different backgrounds. You will have a few different trainers in Men2B. Talk to a trainer if you have a question about one of the topics.

Core Training Topics

- The Men2B trainings have eight core topics. These topics are:
1. Being a Man, Being a Role Model
 2. Supporting Adolescent Development
 3. Communicating Well
 4. Setting Limits and Using Positive Discipline
 5. Reducing Mixed Messages about Sex, Drugs, and Violence
 6. Understanding Reproductive Health
 7. Addressing Abuse: What It Is, Its Effects, and Sources of Help
 8. Making Positive Health Choices

- Each topic gives information about:
- » Growing up,
 - » The risks that teens face, and
 - » How you can help young men make healthy choices.

Each topic lasts about 90 minutes.

After completing the training, you will receive \$100. You must show up and complete all eight sessions in order to receive your \$100.

HELPFUL PROGRAMS IN RHODE ISLAND

Here are some helpful programs and phone numbers in Rhode Island. Use them if you want more information or help for yourself. You can also use them to get help for a boy you know.

FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION LINE
1-800-942-7434 (TOLL FREE IN RI)
401-222-5960 (OUT OF STATE)

Do you have questions about your family’s health? Want to learn more about health programs?

Family Health Information Line specialists are available to answer your questions, in English and Spanish, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

PARENTLINKRI.ORG
WWW.PARENTLINKRI.ORG

ParentLinkRI.org links parents of pre-teens and teens with parenting skill-building programs and services in Rhode Island. Find out about classes and workshops for parents. Also find out about educational, counseling, and recreational activities and services for kids and families.

RHODE ISLAND PARENT INFORMATION NETWORK (RIPIN)
401-727-4144 OR
1-800-464-3399 (TOLL FREE IN RI)
WWW.RIPIN.ORG

RIPIN is a statewide, nonprofit agency that provides information, training, support and advocacy to parents seeking help for their children.

CAN WE TALK RHODE ISLAND?
401-465-9560 OR
401-463-9630
CANWETALKRI@AOL.COM

Can We Talk? is a series of workshops to help parents talk with their pre-teenage children about self-esteem, sexuality, HIV, and peer pressure. Programs are opening around the state. Workshops are held in English and Spanish.

About This Handbook

How This Handbook is Set Up

This handbook will help you remember what you learn in Men2B. Each of the 8 training topics has a section in this book.

Each section has:

- » **Introduction** – This tells you what the topic is about and why it is important. It tells you what you will learn in that section.
- » **As a Role Model...** – This is a list of your goals as a role model. This is what you should do after the training.
- » **Key Points** – The rest of the section has key points from the training.
- » **Resources** – In some sections, you will learn about some programs in Rhode Island. Use them if you want more information or help for yourself. You can also use them to get help for a boy.

How to Use This Handbook

This handbook is for you to keep. You can use it to follow along with your Men2B training. Take notes in it, if you want.

After the training, take a look at this handbook when you need to. For example, you can use it if you are going to talk to your son about STDs. You can also use it as a resource guide when you want to find services for a boy. For example, look in here for programs if you want to help a young man get treatment for a drug or alcohol problem.

Thank You

Thank you for being a part of Men2B and helping make it a success. And thank you for helping us make it even better by filling out the pre and post tests.

Most of all, thank you for being a role model.

BEING A MAN, BEING A ROLE MODEL

1

Boys and young men need caring adults in their lives to help them succeed. Positive male role models can help boys and young men become responsible. Role models can help them grow up healthy. Role models make a big difference in their communities.

Role models are all kinds of people – family members, neighbors, coaches, teachers, bosses, and others. You are a role model.

This session will help you learn what makes a positive role model. You will also learn what you can do to support the boys and young men in your life.

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You guide and support boys and young men.
- » You set a good example for boys and young men.
- » You tell other men how important they are to boys and young men.



The Importance of Men in the Lives of Boys and Young Men

You are a role model.

Boys and young men look to you as an example. You can help them grow up to be healthy, responsible adults.

Teens need adults in their lives to:

- » Love them,
- » Guide them, and
- » Supervise them.

Teens who have this are:

- » Less likely to have sex, use drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- » Less likely to act out in violent ways;
- » More likely to do well in school; and
- » More likely to be in good health.

Children need involved fathers.

Even if you are not a father, this information is important for you as a role model.

Kids need stability, love and support. They need all their parents to be active and involved with them – even if they don’t live together.

When they have loving, involved fathers, children are more likely to:

- » Be healthy;
- » Have fewer behavior problems;
- » Do well in school;
- » Have a higher family income; and
- » Avoid drugs, violence, and teen pregnancy.

Involved fathers offer love, guidance, and discipline. They help kids learn character and responsibility.

Boys, in particular, look to their fathers to learn how a man should act. For example, boys learn to treat girls well if they see their fathers treat women (wives, girlfriends, “exes” and friends) with respect.

Be a Positive Role Model

There are a lot of different ideas (or “stereotypes”) about how men should talk, act, and feel. These come from other people, the media, and our experiences. Some of these stereotypes are good, like men are strong and dependable. Some stereotypes are bad, like men think too much about sports, sex, and drinking.

No one has to live up to these stereotypes. You can choose how you want to behave. You can be an example of positive behavior to boys and young men. You can choose not to show them negative behavior.

AS A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL, YOU...

- » Set an example for responsibility and healthy behavior;
- » Give teens love, support, and praise;
- » Talk and listen well;
- » Give teens a sense of safety – and know where they are;
- » Set clear rules and consequences – and enforce them;
- » Have high expectations for teens;
- » Help them set goals and work towards them;
- » Help teens learn and practice new skills;
- » Teach them the value of community service; and
- » Get help for them, if needed.



FATHERS ARE IMPORTANT

As a father, you make a big difference in your children’s health. This is true even if you are not living together. The most important thing is to be active and involved in your children’s lives.



To do this, you need to spend time with them!

IDEAS FOR SPENDING TIME WITH BOYS

- » Go for a walk
- » Play a game
- » Read to them or listen to them read
- » Cook or eat a meal together
- » Work on a project
- » Browse the Internet together
- » Exercise together
- » Listen to music together – try sharing your favorite CDs with each other
- » Bring your teen to work
- » Go to lunch; make it a regular date
- » Go to the mall
- » Go to the library
- » Go to a museum
- » Do chores together
- » Watch a movie and talk about it
- » Go to a school or sports team activity
- » Go for a drive
- » Go for a bike ride
- » Take a class together – like cooking or martial arts
- » Get involved together in a youth organization
- » Volunteer in the community together
- » Just talk and listen
- » Ask what he wants to do and try it – even if it doesn’t sound fun to you

For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Mentoring

Rhode Island Mentoring Partnership/
Feinstein Mentor Network
401-732-7700, www.rimentor.org

Find out more about being a mentor in Rhode Island. Mentoring programs across the state can match you up with a boy or teen. Some are in community agencies (like Big Brothers). Some programs are in schools. Most programs require a background check and a one-year commitment.

Paternity and Child Support

Child Support Enforcement Office
RI Department of Administration
401-222-2847 (main number) or
401-222-7471 (community liaison/outreach worker)

The Child Support Office will give you services and information about paternity and child support. They will tell you what your rights and responsibilities as a father are. They are “father friendly.” They do not represent either parent in a custody case.

Finding a Job

Rapid Job Entry Program
RI Department of Labor and Training:
www.dlt.state.ri.us
netWORKri career centers: www.networkri.org

These one-stop centers can help you with:

- » Finding a job
- » Skills training
- » Career assessment
- » Interviewing
- » Resume writing
- » Supportive services

Pawtucket401-722-3100
Providence401-462-8900
Wakefield401-789-9721
Warren401-245-9300
West Warwick401-828-8382
Woonsocket401-762-9010

Fathering Programs

Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN)
401-727-4144 or 1-800-464-3399 (toll free in RI)
www.ripin.org
www.ripin.org/fathers.html
(about fatherhood in RI)
www.ripin.org/fatherandfamilynetwork.html
(lists RI agencies with fathering programs)

RIPIN is a statewide, nonprofit agency that provides information, training, support and advocacy to parents seeking help for their children. *(continued on next page)*

For More Information (continued)

Websites

Being a Role Model or a Mentor

America’s Promise
www.americaspromise.org
(Click on “How you can help”)

National Mentoring Partnership
www.mentoring.org

Information about Fatherhood

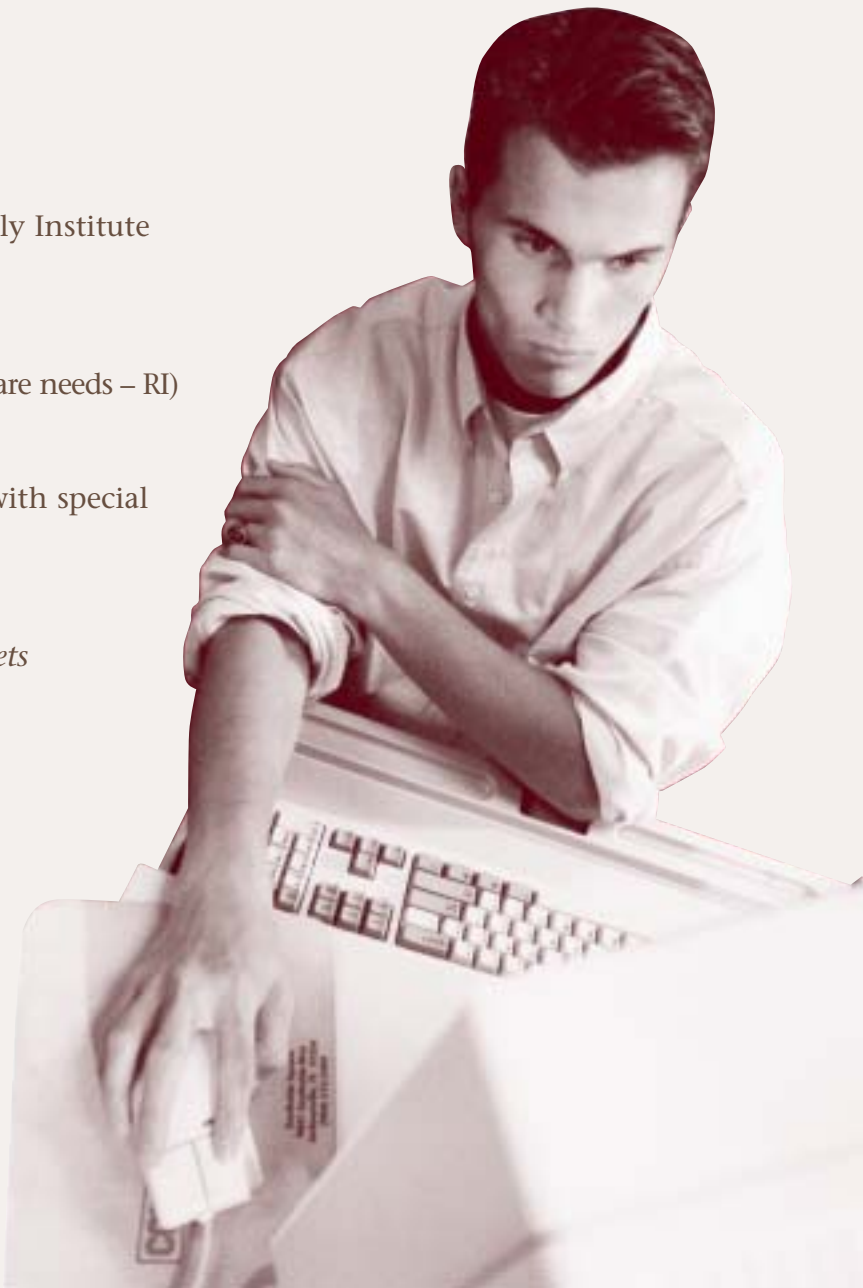
National Fatherhood Initiative
www.fatherhood.org

National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute
www.nlffi.org

Fathers 1st
(fathers of children with special health care needs – RI)
www.fathers1st.org

Fathers Network (fathers of children with special health care needs – national)
www.fathersnetwork.org

Search Institute. *40 Developmental Assets*
www.search-institute.org



SUPPORTING ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

2

Adolescence (puberty and the teen years) is a time of change and growth. These changes are confusing – for both teens and adults.

Teens start looking and acting more like adults, but they are not ready for adult responsibility. Teens face risks, and sometimes they make bad choices. These choices can affect them for the rest of their lives. Parents and role models can help teens make good choices. They can help teens stay away from the risks that can cause them harm.

This session will teach you about some of the changes that teens go through. You will learn how you can help them deal with these changes.

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You talk to boys about what they are going through.
- » You support boys and show them respect.
- » You help boys avoid sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence.
- » You help boys grow up to be healthy, responsible men.



Changes That Happen in Adolescence

During puberty, a boy’s body starts making more hormones like testosterone. These hormones cause a lot of different changes. Some changes are physical (body changes). Some changes are cognitive (thinking or brain changes). Some changes are emotional (feeling changes).

These changes can be very confusing for boys. The more you know about these changes, the more you can help boys understand them. You should reassure boys that these changes are normal.

Physical (“body”) changes

These are some changes that happen to boys’ bodies:

- » Their bodies get bigger and stronger;
- » Their penises and testicles grow;
- » Their voices change;
- » They grow hair on the body, face, and the pubic area;
- » They sweat more;
- » Their skin gets oily, and they get pimples; and
- » They start getting erections and wet dreams.

Cognitive (“thinking” or “brain”) changes

The brain also grows and changes a lot during adolescence. Some of these cognitive changes are:

- » Teens start to learn new skills;
- » They begin to understand more complicated ideas;
- » They can think ahead more;
- » They learn to make decisions and solve problems; and
- » They begin to see other people’s points of view.

EVERY BOY IS DIFFERENT

Each boy goes through these changes at different ages. Sometimes, boys who start puberty later worry about it, but they will catch up. Boys usually start puberty later than girls.

Emotional (“feeling”) changes

As they grow, teens start to feel differently. Normal emotional changes are:

- » Feeling happy one minute, and sad the next;
- » Having a better understanding of right from wrong;
- » Worrying about things like popularity and doing well in school;
- » Getting used to new, sexual feelings;
- » Feeling insecure about sexuality, how their bodies look, and “fitting in;”
- » Feeling that no one can understand them, especially their families;
- » Making new, stronger friendships with other teens; and
- » Being able to handle more responsibility.

GAY TEENS

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered teens may be even more insecure about these changes. They may feel very different. They need extra support.



The Risks That Adolescents Face



DEPRESSION IS COMMON AMONG TEENS

Teens who are depressed feel sad and hopeless. Depression can lead to suicide. Signs of a depressed teen include:

- » Doing poorly in school,
- » Not seeing friends,
- » Not doing regular activities,
- » Having low self-esteem, and
- » Having trouble sleeping.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered teens are at higher risk of depression and suicide.

A more complete list of Signs of Trouble is in Session 7 – Addressing Abuse.

Adolescents take risks. It is a normal part of growing up. Often, teens take risks because their friends are doing those things. Sometimes the risks they take are good, like standing up for what they believe. Sometimes they take risks that are unhealthy or dangerous.

Some examples of unhealthy risks are:

- a. **Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs:** Some teens see smoking as a way to rebel. The media sometimes shows alcohol as a way to relax and have fun. Teens see their peers or adults use alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Some teens start using them and sometimes cannot stop.
- b. **Sex:** Sexuality is everywhere. Teens see it in the media. They hear about it from adults. Teens get a lot of mixed messages about it. Some teens have sex, even though they are not ready to deal with the consequences of having sex.
- c. **Poor diet and not enough exercise:** Teens spend a lot of time watching TV instead of being active. They see a lot of ads for junk food. Many families don't eat together. For these reasons, many teens do not eat right and do not get enough exercise.
- d. **Violence:** Teens may see violence as a way to get what they want. Some boys fight to get respect from others. Some hit their girlfriends to get power and control.
- e. **Gangs:** Teens want to fit in. They want a place to belong. They also want power and respect. Some teens find this by joining gangs.
- f. **Bullying:** Too often, nobody does anything about bullying. Some teens bully others to feel powerful and to get approval from others.
- g. **Safety risks:** Teens often think nothing bad will happen to them. They want to do whatever is easiest or looks like fun, even if it is dangerous. Some teens drive too fast. Many do not use a seat belt. Some drive drunk or ride with someone who has been drinking. Many teens do not use helmets or other safety gear when biking or skateboarding.

Help Boys Avoid Risks and Make Positive Choices

Teens have a lot of energy. You can help them use this energy in positive ways.

AS A ROLE MODEL, YOU CAN...

- » Give boys love and support. This will help them be confident. It will help them have good character.
- » Spend time with them.
- » Talk to them. You don't have to talk about serious stuff. Just talk about everyday things like school, movies, sports or music.
- » Listen to boys. Tell them that what they feel is normal.
- » Help boys learn positive values. Teach them the difference between right and wrong.
- » Help boys figure out who they are. Teach them to like who they are.
- » Help boys make good choices – choices that won't hurt them or others.
- » Help boys learn how to cope well with problems. Teach them to talk to someone they trust. Exercise or walking can also help deal with and think through problems.
- » Teach them how to get along well with their friends and family members.
- » Give boys useful things to do. Have them do chores at home. Give them a special job. Have them volunteer in the community. They need to feel responsible and valued.
- » Be someone they can turn to with questions.
- » Encourage boys to do what interests them – like sports, writing, politics, art, music, dance. They will have fun, and they will learn new skills.
- » Help boys channel their energy into positive risks. Teens need to push themselves. They need to try new things that can build their self-esteem.

TEENS NEED TO CHANNEL THEIR ENERGY INTO POSITIVE RISKS

- Have them try things like:
- » Participating in school politics;
 - » Writing a letter to the school newspaper;
 - » Speaking in public;
 - » Doing community service; or
 - » Rock climbing.

For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Family Health Information Line
1-800-942-7434 (toll free in RI)
401-222-5960 (out of state)

Do you have questions about your family's health? Want to learn more about health programs? Family Health Information Line specialists are available to answer your questions, in English and Spanish, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ParentLinkRI.org
www.parentlinkri.org

ParentLinkRI.org links parents of pre-teens and teens with parenting skill-building programs and services in Rhode Island. Find out about classes and workshops for parents. Also find out about educational, counseling, and recreational activities and services for kids and families.

Websites

Adolescent Development

Dr. Eli Newberger, M.D. *The Men They Will Become*
www.elinewberger.com/earlyadol.html

(Early adolescence)

www.elinewberger.com/lateadol.html

(Late adolescence)

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. "Normal Adolescent Development"
www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/develop.htm

Search Institute. *40 Developmental Assets*
www.search-institute.org

Raising Teens

Nemours Foundation. "A Parent's Guide to Surviving Adolescence"
www.kidshealth.org/parent/growth/growing/adolescence.html

A.R. Simpson. *Raising Teens: A Synthesis of Research and a Foundation for Action*
www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/parenting/raising.html

COMMUNICATING WELL

3

Good communication is important. It helps with all relationships, including with boys. But good communication takes practice.

This session will help you learn how people communicate in different ways. You will learn how to communicate with boys. This will help you build trust with them.

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You talk with boys about tough issues like sex, drugs, and violence.
- » You earn boys' trust.
- » You help boys learn to communicate well.



Good Communication is Important!

Role models must communicate well with boys. Good communication will help you build trust with a teen. If a boy trusts you, he will be more likely to turn to you when he needs help. He will also listen to you more. Teens do care about what adults think, especially adults who care about them.

You should teach boys how to communicate well with others. This builds confidence. It also helps boys deal with difficult situations. It will help them deal with peer pressure. It will help them be able to stand up for themselves.

Learn to Communicate Well: Types and Styles of Communication

People communicate verbally and non-verbally. Verbal communication is when people use words. Non-verbal communication is when people send messages using gestures, facial expressions and body language.

There are 3 styles of communication: passive, assertive, and aggressive. Assertive works best.

EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT STYLE OF COMMUNICATING

Everyone uses all three styles at different times. Assertive communication works best. It takes practice. But the more you use it, the better.

PASSIVE COMMUNICATION IS WHEN A PERSON:
» Does not express needs, wants, or opinions; » Does not take a stand; » Agrees with others, regardless of one’s own beliefs; and » Avoids eye contact.
ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION IS WHEN A PERSON:
» Honestly expresses needs, wants, and opinions; » Takes a stand; » Tries to understand others before stating feelings; and » Uses direct and warm eye contact.
AGGRESSIVE COMMUNICATION IS WHEN A PERSON:
» Expresses needs, wants, or opinions in a hostile way; » Forces things on others; » Ignores other people’s feelings; and » Stares or uses stern eye contact.

Building Trust: The Basis of Good Communication

If you want a boy to open up to you, you must earn his trust first. How can you build a trusting, caring relationship?

- » **Spend time with him.** Be available when he needs you. Keep the lines of communication open by letting him know that you are always there when he wants to talk.
- » **Listen to him.** Ask questions. Trust starts with knowing you’re listening.
- » **Always let him know you care about him.** This will build his self-esteem. It will give him confidence.
- » **Be supportive.** Show affection. Encourage him.
- » **Communicate early and often** – especially about the “tough stuff” like sex, drugs, and violence. Doing this will let the boy know he can talk to you. If you say things often, he is more likely to remember. And he is more likely to follow your advice.
- » **Don’t just talk about serious stuff.** Talk about everyday things like music, movies, and how your day was. These talks will help you get to know each other.
- » **Be honest.** Teens can usually tell when you aren’t. It’s okay to say that something is too personal, or that you are not willing to talk about it.
- » **Be open to his opinions.** You may not agree with him, but respect his point of view. Listen to him first. Then you can explain your opinion.
- » **Show interest in his life.** He will take you more seriously if you understand “his world” – the music, movies, people and events he likes. Ask him what interests him. Ask him about his feelings and beliefs.
- » **Teach him how to communicate.** Help him learn what you have learned about communication.

COMMUNICATION IS DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT CULTURES.

For example, people stand close to each other in some cultures. In other cultures, people stand further away. Have you noticed different ways of communicating among your friends from other cultures? Respect the boundaries and values of a boy’s family and culture. If you aren’t a boy’s father, make sure you know what is okay or not okay to talk about.

Tips for Good Communication



TIPS FOR GOOD LISTENING

- » Give your full attention to the other person. Stop what you are doing while you talk to someone else.
- » Turn your body toward the other person. Make eye contact.
- » Respond to what they are saying with words like “I see...” and “Uh-huh...”
- » Focus on what the other person is really saying.
- » Ask questions if you don’t understand something.

DO...

- » Listen to his ideas and problems. It is as important to listen as it is to talk. Don’t interrupt.
- » Ask direct questions. Ask questions that will get more than a one-word answer. For example, instead of asking, “Did you have a good day at school?” try asking, “What happened in school today?”
- » Use “I” messages, like “I think” “I feel” or “I would like” – rather than “You did this” or “Why did you do that?” or “You make me...” This helps you talk about your feelings, and avoid blaming the other person.
- » Pay attention to his body language. Listen to his tone of voice. This will help you understand how he is feeling.
- » Pick a good time and place to talk – somewhere you can talk openly, won’t feel rushed, and don’t have to yell to be heard.
- » Use words that are right for the boy’s age. Communicating with younger boys is different than with older teens.
- » Be aware of your own actions and words. Boys watch how adults behave and they imitate it. Set a good example.

DON’T...

- » Don’t wait for a boy to come talk to you. He may think that you don’t care.
- » Don’t use hurtful words. Don’t say things you will regret later. (But if you do, go back and apologize as soon as you can.)
- » Don’t tease too much. Boys can be very sensitive and too much teasing hurts them.
- » Don’t lecture too much. Say your point of view and leave it at that.
- » Don’t just talk to him when he has done something wrong. Praise him when he does good things.
- » Don’t assume. Ask questions if you are unsure what he means.
- » Don’t say one thing and do another. This is confusing.

For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Talking with Teens

Can We Talk Rhode Island?
401-465-9560 or 401-463-9630
canwetalkri@aol.com

Can We Talk? is a series of workshops to help parents talk with their pre-teenage children about self-esteem, sexuality, HIV, and peer pressure. Programs are opening around the state. Workshops are held in English and Spanish.

ParentLinkRI.org
www.parentlinkri.org

ParentLinkRI.org links parents of pre-teens and teens with parenting skill-building programs and services in Rhode Island. Find out about classes and workshops for parents. Also find out about educational, counseling, and recreational activities and services for kids and families.

Websites

Talking with Teens

Talking with Kids about Tough Issues
www.talkingwithkids.org

KidSource, “How Can Parents Model Good Listening Skills”
www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/How_Can_Parents_Model.html

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration,
A Family Guide to Keeping Youth Mentally Healthy & Drug Free –
“Talk With Your Child” www.family.samhsa.gov/talk

Whitehouse Council on Youth Violence. (2000.) *Helping Your Children Navigate Their Teen Years: A Guide for Parents*.
<http://media.shs.net/ken/pdf/SVP-0013/SVP-0013.pdf>

SETTING LIMITS AND USING POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

4

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You use a positive style of parenting or being a role model to boys and young men.
- » You discipline boys in positive, helpful ways.
- » You help boys learn to act responsibly.
- » You help make sure boys are supervised when they are not in school.

Boys need adults to watch over them and guide them. They need clear rules to follow to keep them safe. They need to be held responsible when they break the rules.

In this session, you will learn how to set limits. You will learn to use positive discipline for boys of different ages. You will also learn how to help boys learn to make good decisions.



Importance of Adult Supervision and Guidance

Boys and young men need you to watch over them. Teens often get into trouble if they have too much unsupervised time.

They also need you to guide them and help them make healthy choices. They need you to teach them discipline. This helps them learn to be responsible.

Parenting/Role Model Styles and Discipline

The information below is important for all role models – even if you are not a parent.

There are four basic kinds of parenting:

- » **Positive Parenting** is warm and supportive, while being clear and firm with limits.
- » **Permissive Parenting** is when you don't always enforce the rules or don't have rules at all. You are more of a "pal" than a parent.
- » **Dominating Parenting** is harsh and uses a lot of punishment.
- » **Uninvolved Parenting** is when teens cannot count on you to be there for them. Teens raise themselves.

Research shows that positive parenting is best. Teens raised by positive parents are more likely to:

- » Do well in school;
- » Avoid risky behavior;
- » Be less depressed; and
- » Have better social skills.



Discipline and Punishment: What's the Difference?

Discipline is not the same as punishment.

**IT TAKES TIME AND
PATIENCE TO DISCIPLINE
SOMEONE**

Discipline works better in the long run. With discipline, a teen learns self-control. He learns to make better choices.

Discipline: To discipline a boy means to guide his behavior in a positive way. Discipline is really about teaching him how to improve his behavior.

Punishment: To punish a boy means to make him suffer for something he did wrong. Punishment is really about anger and control.

TIPS FOR USING POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

- » Respect the boy's needs and feelings when disciplining him. Don't make him feel ashamed.
- » Make it clear that you care.
- » Talk about the situation. Listen to the teen's point of view.
- » Choose your battles. Focus on the issues that really matter.
- » If you argue, stay calm. Stay in charge. Remember, you are the adult.
- » Keep a sense of humor and perspective.
- » Praise teens when they do something right. Sometimes teens think that adults only notice when they do things wrong.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Do what you want the teen to do. This is the best way to teach good behavior.

Set clear rules and consequences (things that happen as a result of your actions).

All children and teens need rules and consequences that are clear and consistent.

Have firm rules about things that affect health, safety, or your family values. These should not change, even if the teen does not agree with them. For example, firm rules could include: "You must always wear your safety helmet when riding a bike or skateboarding," or "You are not allowed to smoke or drink alcohol."

Have flexible rules about things that do not affect health, safety, or family values. These can be discussed or changed. They can even be dropped, if there is a good reason. For example, a flexible rule could be: "You cannot have long hair." You can discuss having long hair with your teen, and if he wants long hair, he must keep it clean and combed.

SET CONSEQUENCES THAT...

- » Fit the boy's age.
- » Are not too extreme, but not so minor that they will be ignored.
- » Relate to what happened. For example, if a boy breaks his curfew, then he is not allowed to go out the next time.
- » Happen soon after the rule was broken. If you wait too long, they won't have an impact.
- » Are realistic. You have to be able to follow through.
- » Get more serious each time the rule is broken. That way the teen will start to take the rule seriously.

HELP THE BOY FOLLOW THE RULES...

- » Explain the reasons behind the rules. Use words he will understand.
- » Help him figure out how to follow the rules even when adults are not around.

WHEN RULES ARE BROKEN...

- » Enforce the rules consistently. If you look the other way, he won't take the rules seriously.
- » Follow through with consequences. Empty threats don't work in the long run.
- » Talk to him about the situation. Teach him to make better choices.
- » If he continues to break a rule, set bigger consequences.

**KNOW WHAT THE BOY
IS DOING**

Know:

- » WHO he is with;
- » WHAT he's doing;
- » WHERE he is; and
- » WHEN he'll be home.

Make sure he knows that you know this. Explain that you want to know because you care.



For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Positive Parenting

ParentLinkRI.org
www.parentlinkri.org

ParentLinkRI.org links parents of pre-teens and teens with parenting skill-building programs and services in Rhode Island. Find out about classes and workshops for parents. Also find out about educational, counseling, and recreational activities and services for kids and families.

Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN)
401-727-4144 or 1-800-464-3399 (toll free in RI)
www.ripin.org

RIPIN is a statewide, nonprofit agency that provides information, training, support and advocacy to parents seeking help for their children.

Positive Discipline

Prevent Child Abuse RI
401-728-7920
www.preventchildabuse-ri.org

Websites

Positive Parenting

Shoulder to Shoulder
www.shouldertosoulderminnesota.org

Nemours Foundation, “Positive Parenting”
www.kidshealth.org/parent/positive

Hablemos en Confianza (English/Spanish)
www.soyunica.gov/adults

Positive Discipline

University of Nebraska-Lincoln,
“Positive Approach to Discipline”
<http://ianrpubs.unl.edu/family/g1190.htm>

REDUCING MIXED MESSAGES ABOUT SEX, DRUGS & VIOLENCE

5

Boys get a lot of messages about sex, drugs, and violence. They see and hear things in the media (TV, radio, magazines, or the Internet). They see and hear things from adults. Often they get mixed messages. They need you to help them make sense of it all.

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You help boys make good choices about how much and what types of media they watch and listen to.
- » You help clear up mixed messages.
- » You help boys understand why they should stay away from sex, drugs, and violence.



Where Do Teens Learn about Sex, Drugs, and Violence?

Teens see and hear a lot about sex, drugs, and violence. They get a lot of messages from many places such as:

- » Their parents,
- » Other adults,
- » Their friends, and
- » The media. The average teen spends a lot of time watching TV and movies, listening to music and the radio, surfing the Internet, reading magazines, and playing video/computer games.

All of these have a big influence on teens.

What is a Mixed Message?

Mixed messages are messages that say opposite things.

Mixed messages can come from different people. For example, one parent might tell a teen that he has to finish his chores, and the other one tells him that he can skip them.

Sometimes, a person gets mixed messages from one person. An adult might say one thing one time and something else another time. Or an adult might say one thing but do another. For example, a man might tell a teen that he values their relationship but never spend time with him.

The media can also give mixed messages. The media can be educational, but it can also be false or misleading.

WHAT MIXED MESSAGES DO TEENS GET ABOUT SEX, DRUGS, & VIOLENCE?	
TOO OFTEN TEENS HEAR...	THEY DON'T HEAR ENOUGH...
Casual sex is normal for young people. STDs and unplanned pregnancies are rare.	Teens should wait to have sex. They could get an STD or get someone pregnant.
Smoking and drugs make you cool. They will bring you money, women, and power.	Smoking and drugs are unhealthy and dangerous.
Being a man means being tough. Sometimes you have to harm people to get your way.	Violence is not a good way to solve problems.

How to Help Boys Make Healthy Decisions

Help him make good choices about what he watches or listens to.

Limit the amount of time he spends watching TV, surfing the Internet or playing video games. Monitor and learn about what he is watching. Suggest programs, movies, and music that you'd like him to see or hear.

Talk about messages in the media.

- » Not everything in the media is true.
- » Explain the difference between facts and points of view.
- » Teach him to judge for himself whether or not he agrees with what he sees.
- » Help him see that the media is sometimes trying to sell things.
- » Talk about consequences. The media rarely shows what happens when people make unhealthy choices.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Boys imitate adults. Set a good example by abstaining from sex, drugs, violence, and making good choices about the media.



REASONS TO CHOOSE ABSTINENCE

- MEDICAL REASONS
- » You can't get pregnant or get someone pregnant.
 - » You avoid sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS.
- RELATIONSHIP REASONS
- » Teens are not ready for the kind of long-term commitment and intimacy that should go with a sexual relationship.
 - » You can have a close relationship without sex. By spending time talking and getting to know each other, you can build intimacy and trust.
- PERSONAL REASONS
- » Most people want to wait to have sex until the right time in their life and until they are with the right person. Most teens who have had sex say they wish they had waited.
 - » A person may choose to be abstinent because of religious beliefs or personal values.
 - » A person may choose to be abstinent even after he has had sex.
 - » Abstinence can keep you from getting hurt. It can help you avoid bad feelings like jealousy.
 - » It is a sign of maturity to resist pressure. Many young women and men say they feel pressured into sexual intercourse.

[Adapted in part from the Halton Region Health Department, Ontario, Canada: www.region.halton.on.ca/health/programs/sexualhealth/birth_control/abstinence.htm

Talk about why teens should stay away from sex, drugs, and violence. Be clear and consistent. Learning about these things will not make a teen do them.

Set clear expectations about staying away from sex, drug use, and violence.

- » **Sex:** school-age teens should not have oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
- » **Drugs:** teens should not drink alcohol, smoke or chew tobacco, or use any illicit drugs. They should not overuse caffeine, prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, household chemicals, or other products with drugs in them. Teens should talk to their medical doctor before using any kind of “performance enhancers” for sports.
- » **Violence:** teens should not intentionally injure themselves or others. Teens should also not threaten or try to exert power or control over others, including boyfriends or girlfriends.

Talk to him about what he can do, not just what he can't do.

For example, it is normal and healthy for a teen to:

- » Flirt,
- » Kiss,
- » Hold hands,
- » Dance,
- » Date, or
- » Think about someone they like.

Explain that he is not ready for all adult behaviors, such as sex and drinking. Moderate drinking is okay for most adults because they are more mature than teens, and their bodies and brains have finished growing. Sex is okay for most adults because they are socially, financially, and emotionally ready for the responsibilities that go along with sexual relationships.

Help him understand complex messages. For example, you might say, “Don't drink, but if you do, don't drive.”

- » Explain that you expect him not to drink. Tell him you would be upset if he did.
- » Explain that his safety is most important and that you would be more upset if he drove drunk or rode with someone who was drunk. Tell him that you would rather he call you to pick him up than risk getting in an accident. He should not drive drunk no matter what.

For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Can We Talk Rhode Island?
401-465-9560 or 401-463-9630
canwetalkri@aol.com

Can We Talk? is a series of workshops to help parents talk with their pre-teenage children about self-esteem, sexuality, HIV, and peer pressure. Programs are opening around the state. Workshops are held in English and Spanish.

Websites

The Media

National Institute on Media and the Family
www.mediafamily.org

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, “Children and Watching TV”
www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/tv.htm

Helping Teens Avoid Sex

Journeyworks Publishing,
“Encouraging Abstinence: 10 Tips for Parents”
www.journeyworks.com/pamphlet/5128.htm
(English)

www.promotehealth.com/pamphlet/5137.htm
(Spanish)

Regional Municipality of Halton, “Abstinence”
www.region.halton.on.ca/health/programs/sexualhealth/birth_control/Abstinence.htm

Helping Teens Avoid Alcohol, Tobacco, & Drugs

Family Guide to Keeping Youth Mentally Healthy & Drug Free
www.family.samhsa.gov

National Youth Anti-drug Media Campaign
www.theantidrug.com
www.laantidroga.com (Spanish),
www.druganswer.com (Asian languages)

The Truth (American Legacy Foundation)
www.thetruth.com

Helping Teens Avoid Violence

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
www.safeyouth.org

AS A ROLE MODEL...

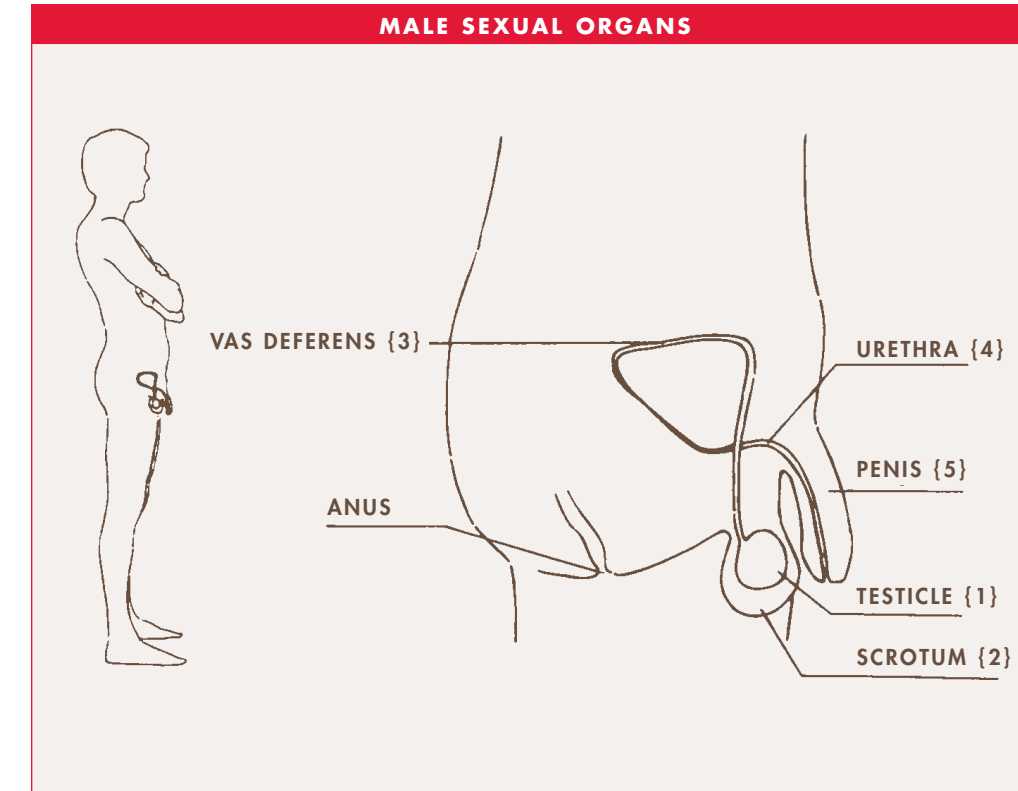
- » You talk to boys about sex with honesty and respect.
- » You talk to boys about the reasons they should avoid sex.
- » You give boys the facts about sex so they can make good choices, now and when they are adults.
- » You take care of your own reproductive health.

As boys grow, their bodies change. They become more aware of sexual feelings. And they face choices. Pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are risks for teens. Boys need you to help them avoid these risks. They need you to help them make healthy choices.

This session will help you learn about the male and female bodies. You will learn about pregnancy and STDs and how to avoid them. You will learn how to talk about these things with boys.



The Male and Female Bodies



Testicles (testes or “balls”) {1} are where sperm are made and stored.

The scrotum {2} protects the testicles.

Semen is fluid that carries sperm.

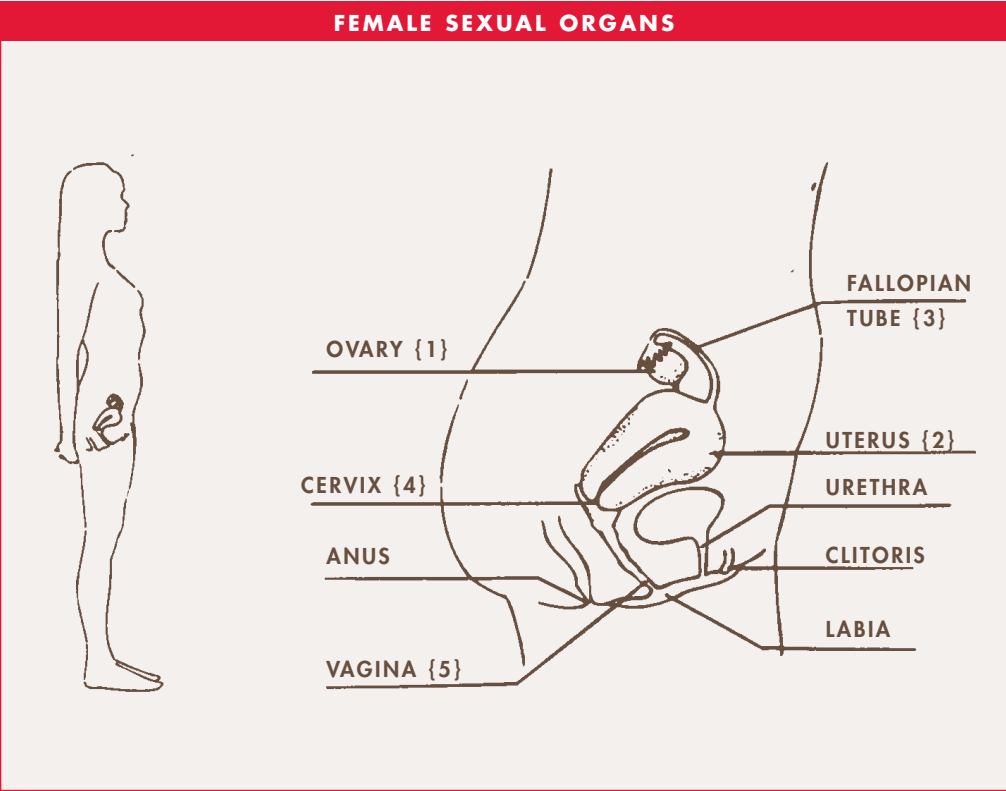
The vas deferens {3} is a tube that carries semen from the testicles.

The urethra {4} is a tube that runs through the penis. The urethra carries semen and urine out of the body. It can’t carry semen and urine at the same time.

When a male is sexually aroused, the penis {5} fills with blood and becomes erect (“hard”). While the penis is erect, semen and sperm go through the urethra and out of the body (ejaculation or “cum”).

TEENS AND SEX

- » The U.S. has a very high teen pregnancy rate – higher than almost any other Western country.
- » In 2002, almost 2% of girls 15-17 years old in Rhode Island had a child.
- » In Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket these numbers are much higher.
- » In 2003, 44% of RI public high school students said they have had sexual intercourse.



The ovaries {1} are two small organs that store eggs. There is one ovary on either side of the uterus (“womb”) {2}.

Every month, an egg is released from an ovary. The egg goes through the fallopian tubes {3} to the uterus.

If a sperm fertilizes the egg, the fertilized egg will attach itself to the uterus.

If a sperm does not fertilize the egg, it leaves the uterus, goes through a small opening in the uterus called the cervix {4}, and out through the vagina {5}. Part of the lining of the uterus and a small amount of blood also leaves the body with the egg.

This cycle is called menstruation (or a woman’s “period”). It lasts from 3-7 days.

The whole menstrual cycle takes about 28 days, but this varies from woman to woman.

Pregnancy

How Pregnancy Happens

- » During sex, sperm leave the man’s penis and go into the vagina.
- » Sperm go through the uterus and the fallopian tubes. Sperm can live in a woman’s body up to 5 days.
- » Sperm try to fertilize an egg (attach to it). Conception happens when a sperm fertilizes an egg.
- » Pregnancy happens when the fertilized egg moves through the fallopian tubes and attaches to the wall of the uterus. That is where it grows.
- » A woman is “fertile” (she can get pregnant) during the few days before an egg is released from her ovaries (“ovulation”). It is hard to tell exactly when an egg will be released because it can happen at different times each month. A woman should be considered fertile at any time of the month.

Birth Control: How to Avoid Pregnancy

Some common methods of birth control are:

- 1. Abstinence:** Abstinence means not having any kind of sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, or oral). It is the only 100% effective way of avoiding pregnancy. It is also the only 100% effective way of avoiding STDs or HIV/AIDS.
- 2. Hormonal methods:**
 - » The Pill, Depo Provera, the Patch, and the Ring use hormones to stop the ovaries from releasing an egg. They are very effective at preventing pregnancies.
 - » The Pill is taken orally (by mouth) every day. Depo Provera (“Depo” or “the Shot”) is a shot that lasts for 12 weeks. The Patch is a thin plastic patch placed on the skin once a week for three out of four weeks. The Ring is a small ring that is put into the vagina once a month.

AVOIDING PREGNANCY AND STDs

Abstinence means not having any kind of sexual intercourse – vaginal, anal, or oral. It is the only 100% effective way of avoiding pregnancy. It is also the only 100% effective way of avoiding STDs or HIV/AIDS.

Condoms are very effective against pregnancy and most STDs. But only if you use them right and use them every time you have sex.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR BIRTH CONTROL

Birth control is the responsibility of both men and women. Both are responsible for the consequences of sex.

3. Barrier methods:

- » Condoms, female condoms, diaphragms, and cervical caps block sperm from entering the woman’s reproductive system.
- » It is best to use a barrier method and a spermicide together. A spermicide is a cream or gel that helps kill sperm.
- » Male and female condoms can also help prevent HIV/AIDS and other STDs. They block an infection from passing from one person to another.
- » Condoms need to be used right and they need to be used every time. They also need to be put on and taken off the right way, or they won’t be effective.

4. Other methods:

- » The IUD (“intrauterine device”) is put inside a woman’s uterus. It is effective for 1 to 10 years, depending on the type.
- » Surgical methods (“sterilization”) –include vasectomy for men and tubal ligation for women. They are for people who are sure they don’t want any more children, ever. The RI Department of Health offers no-cost vasectomy to men who do not have health insurance that covers it. Call the Family Health Information Line at 1-800-942-7434 for more information.
- » Fertility Awareness Method is about learning the changes in a woman’s body during the menstrual cycle. It helps show when she can and cannot get pregnant. A special class is needed to learn this.
- » Emergency contraception pills are a special dose of birth control pills that can help prevent pregnancy up to 3 days after sex. The sooner they are taken after sex, the more likely they are to work. Emergency contraception is for emergency use only. It doesn’t work as well as other methods. It also does not protect against STDs.

Things That Can Happen When Teens Have Sex

Pregnancy

ANYONE who has vaginal sex is at risk for pregnancy. Getting someone pregnant and having a baby will change a teen’s life forever.

Teens that have a baby are more likely to:

- » Drop out of school
- » Be single parents
- » Be poor

STDs

ANYONE can get an STD, including HIV/AIDS, if they have anal, oral, or vaginal sex – even once. This can also change a teen’s life forever.

Negative Emotions

Sex can be confusing for teens. They can get hurt. A teen may feel “ready” to have sex. But sex takes more maturity than most teens have. In fact, most teens who have had sex say they wish they had waited.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

A young man is legally responsible for his baby. This is true even if he doesn’t want the baby. He has to support the baby – emotionally and financially. Teen boys are not ready for this.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)

THE MOST COMMON STDs ARE:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| » Gonorrhea | » HIV (which causes AIDS) |
| » Chlamydia | » Hepatitis B |
| » Trichomoniasis | » Genital Herpes |
| » Syphilis | » HPV (some kinds cause genital warts and some kinds can cause cancer of the cervix) |

ANYONE can get an STD if they have sex – even once. The more people they have sex with, the more likely they are to get an STD. If they have sex and do not use a condom it is much more likely.

STDs

STDs are a big deal. They can last a lifetime. They can cause:

- » infertility (not being able to have kids),
- » pain that doesn't go away, and
- » major health problems, like cancer.

People can get STDs even if they don't have vaginal sex. You can also get STDs through anal sex or oral sex. You can even get some STDs through intimate skin-to-skin contact, even if you do not have sex.

Having an STD makes it easier to get – or pass on – HIV/AIDS.

Some people have signs or symptoms like:

- » bumps, sores, or warts on the genitals
- » rashes or redness
- » burning or pain while peeing
- » itching
- » a strange fluid coming out of the penis, vagina or rectum

Many people do not have any symptoms at first. You can have an STD and not know it. Even if you don't have symptoms, you can pass the STD to your partner.

Testing for STDs including HIV/AIDS is very important.

- » Most STDs can be treated with antibiotics. But they need to be found early. Genital Herpes, HPV, and HIV are viruses that can be treated. But so far, they can't be cured.
- » The only way to know if you have an STD is to get tested.
- » Testing for STDs or HIV/AIDS is available at:
 - » many family planning clinics,
 - » most community health centers,
 - » hospitals,
 - » some school-based health centers,
 - » Whitmarsh House,
 - » Crossroads Rhode Island, and
 - » Planned Parenthood.

Call the Family Health Information Line at 1-800-942-7434 (toll free in RI) or 401-222-5960 (out of state) for more information.

TIPS FOR TALKING TO A BOY ABOUT SEXUALITY AND ABSTINENCE

- » Help him know the facts about sex, pregnancy and STDs. This will help him deal with his feelings and with peer pressure.
- » Talk to him early and often about sex. Talk about making good choices. The more you talk to him, the more comfortable he will be.
- » Be honest about your feelings. If you are uncomfortable, say something like, "This is hard to talk about. But I want you to know the facts. I want you to have someone to talk to."
- » If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. Try to find out the answer with him.
- » Be understanding and supportive. Try not to be alarmed about questions or statements he makes. Reassure him about his concerns.
- » Respect his privacy. But if he needs professional help, help him get it.
- » Respect his family, religious, and cultural values about sex.
- » Don't assume he is straight. He may be gay, bisexual or transgendered. Regardless of his sexual orientation, he should abstain from oral, anal, and vaginal sex.
- » Don't be afraid to express your opinions. Teens listen to adults they trust.
- » Talk to him about abstaining from alcohol, drugs, and sex. If he drinks alcohol or does drugs, he is more likely to make poor choices about sex.



For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

STDs and HIV/AIDS

Can We Talk Rhode Island?
401-465-9560 or 401-463-9630
canwetalkri@aol.com

Can We Talk? is a series of workshops to help parents talk with their pre-teenage children about self-esteem, sexuality, HIV, and peer pressure. Programs are opening around the state. Workshops are held in English and Spanish.

Family Health Information Line
1-800-942-7434 (toll free in RI)
401-222-5960 (out of state)

Find out where to you can get tested or treated for STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Find out about getting a vasectomy if your health insurance does not cover it. You can also find out about family planning clinics and other health programs. Family Health Information Line specialists are available to answer your questions in English and Spanish, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Paternity and Child Support

Child Support Enforcement Office
RI Department of Administration
401-222-2847 (main number) or
401-222-7471 (community liaison/outreach worker)

The Child Support Office will give you services and information about paternity and child support. They will tell you what your rights and responsibilities as a father are. They are “father friendly.” They do not represent either parent in a custody case.

Websites and Other Resources

National STD/HIV Hotline

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1-800-227-8922 (toll free)
1-800-344-7432 (Spanish, toll free)
1-800-243-7889 (TTY, toll free)
www.cdc.gov/std

Reproductive Health Information for Parents/Adults

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
www.teenpregnancy.org
www.teenpregnancy.org/parent

American Sexual Health Association
www.iwannaknow.org

Reproductive Health Information for Teens

Rutgers University, Sex Etc. (by teens for teens)
www.sexetc.org

Nemours Foundation, TeensHealth, Sexual Health
www.kidshealth.org/teen

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
www.teenpregnancy.org/teen

ADDRESSING ABUSE: WHAT IT IS, ITS EFFECTS & SOURCES OF HELP

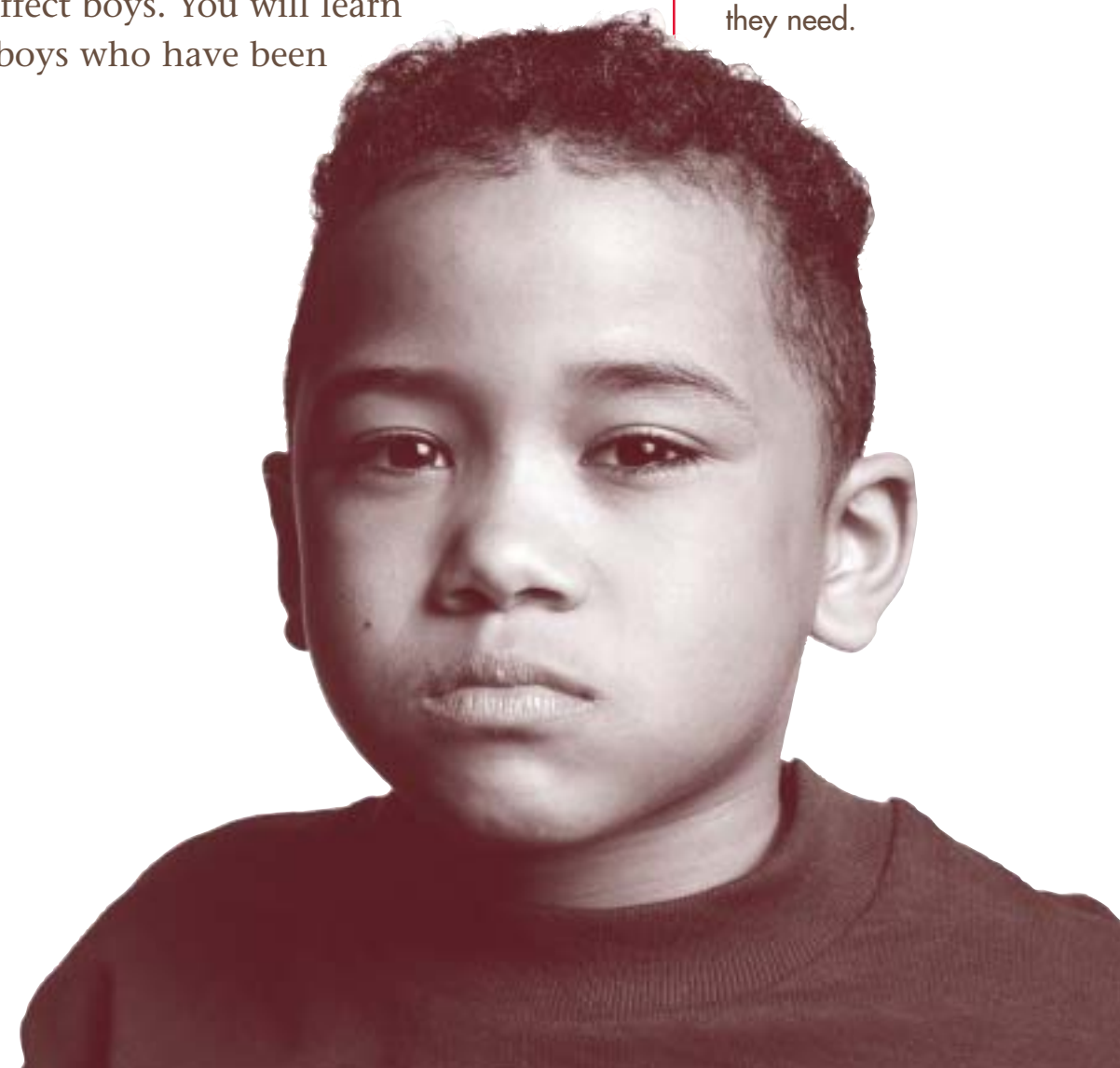
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Too many boys and young men have been hurt by abuse. Being abused can affect a teen for the rest of his life. It is very important for adults to protect children and teens from abuse. They also need to help abused children heal from the abuse.

In this section, you will find information on what abuse is and how it can affect boys. You will learn how you can help boys who have been abused.

AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You try to protect boys from abuse.
- » You teach boys to not abuse others.
- » You support boys who have been abused. You get them the help they need.



What is Abuse?

Abuse is hurting another person physically, sexually, emotionally or verbally. Abuse is about one person trying to use power and control over another.

Abuse can happen to ANYONE. Abuse happens to all kinds of people – regardless of their race, ethnicity, income, age, sex, or size.

Abuse is NEVER okay. Most children or teens who have been abused think that it is partly their own fault. But it is never the fault of the victim. It doesn't matter how old the child is. It doesn't matter what the child did or did not do. It is always the fault of the person who does the abusing.

SEXUAL ABUSE FACT

Some experts estimate that 1 in 8 boys is sexually abused. But these numbers are hard to know for sure because not everyone reports abuse.

Some Kinds of Abuse That Children and Teens Face Are:

Child Abuse

Child abuse is hurting a child so that his well-being or life is in danger. Children are most often abused by someone they know and trust.

Child abuse can be:

- » Physical – like beating or kicking;
- » Sexual – like sexual touching or rape; or
- » Emotional/verbal – like making him feel very afraid or worthless.

It can also be neglect of a child (not meeting a child's needs). Examples include not feeding a child or letting a child live in a dirty, unhealthy place.

Most children and teens who say they have been abused are telling the truth. Take them seriously.

Teen Dating Abuse

Dating abuse is any hurtful and unwanted action by a dating partner (boyfriend or girlfriend). If nothing is done to stop it, dating abuse usually gets worse over time.

Most victims of dating abuse are young women. But some young men are victims, too.

Some examples of dating abuse are:

- » Hitting;
- » Forcing sex physically or by threats;
- » Trying to control a partner's actions;
- » Making a partner feel worthless;
- » Not letting a partner have relationships with others, including friends and family; and
- » Threatening violence.

Sexual Assault and Rape

Sexual assault is any sexual activity that is forced or unwanted. Rape is when one person uses an object or part of their body to enter another person's body by force.

Sexual assault and rape are NOT about sex. They are about power and control.

Sexually taking advantage of someone who has been drinking or doing drugs is rape. This is because the person is not sober enough to agree to sex.

Bullying

Bullying is when a child or teen hurts another with teasing, threatening, or beating.

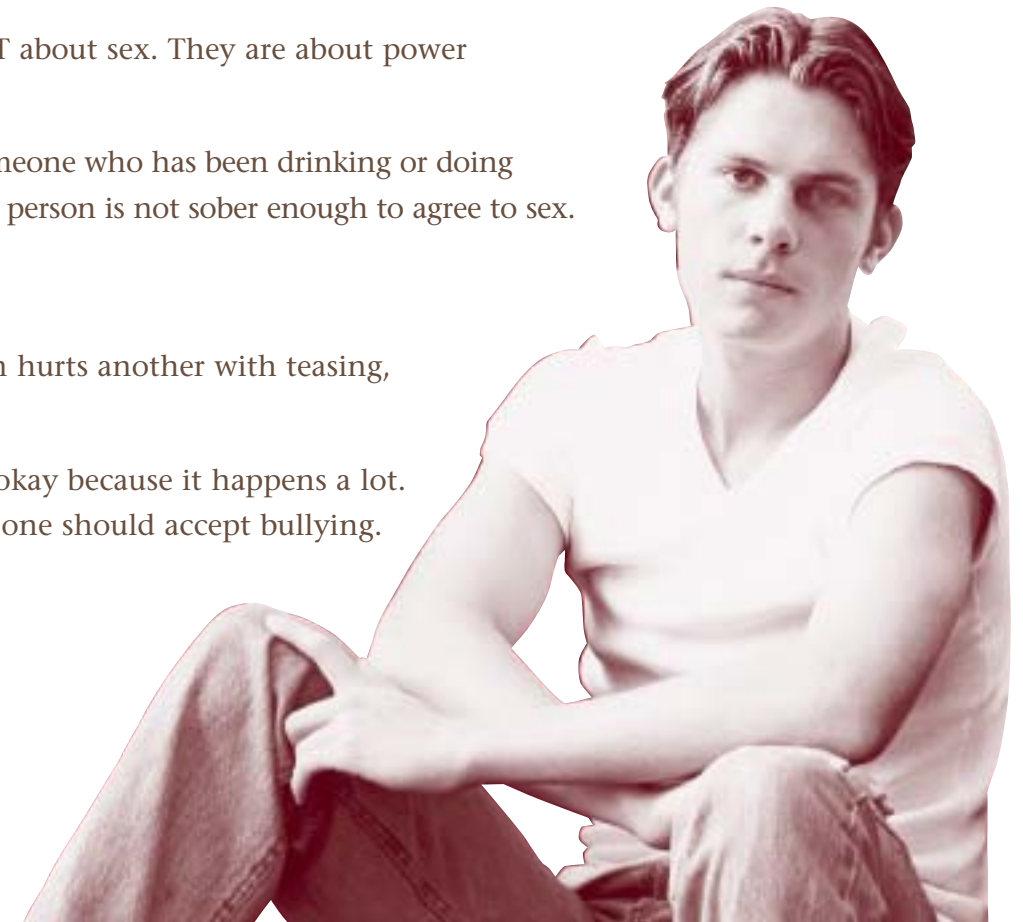
Many people think bullying is okay because it happens a lot. But bullying is not normal. No one should accept bullying.

Being bullied can hurt a boy's:

- » Grades,
- » Ability to concentrate,
- » Confidence, and
- » Self-esteem.

DATING ABUSE FACT

As many as 1 in 3 teen girls have been physically or sexually abused by a date. But these numbers are hard to know for sure because not everyone reports abuse.



Bullies may have problems themselves. They may be bullied. They may get either not enough or overly harsh discipline at home.

They need help from a caring role model to deal with their feelings. They need to learn to respect and care for others.

If a boy says that he is being picked on, the best thing to do is to talk to him.

- » Ask him what is going on.
- » Help him figure out what to do.
- » Listen and be supportive.
- » Ask what he needs to feel safe.
- » Tell him the bullying is not his fault.
- » Tell him he did the right thing by telling you.
- » Do not tell him to fight back.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered teens are more likely to be bullied than their peers.

HELP STOP ABUSE

As soon as you can, call **1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)**. Trained professionals can help boys who have been abused to heal and to get away from the person who is hurting them.

Laws About Abuse

Child Abuse: If you know or think that a child is being abused or neglected, you must report it to the Department of Children, Youth and Families within 24 hours. Call 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453).

Sexual Assault: A person never has a legal right to force sex on another person, even their wife or husband. In Rhode Island, a person can be found guilty of sexual assault even if the victim does not testify against him/her.

Statutory Rape: Under Rhode Island law, it is illegal for someone 18 years old or older to have sex with anyone under 16 years of age.

How Abuse Affects Boys

No matter what kind of abuse a boy experiences, it may cause serious problems that can last for life.

Sometimes you can't tell whether someone has been abused by looking at them. If a boy has been hurt physically, emotionally, verbally, or sexually, he may:

- » Do poorly in school;
- » Become depressed;
- » Try to hurt or kill himself;
- » Become rebellious;
- » Take risks like having sex, using drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco; and
- » Become violent.

But if he gets help, a boy can heal from the abuse. The sooner he gets help, the better. He can live a healthy life.

How Can You Help Stop Abuse?

If you know or think a boy has been abused, the most important thing you can do is listen to him. Get help as soon as possible. The sooner a boy can get help, the better he will be in the long-term. Use the skills you are learning in this program to be supportive, patient, and caring.



TIPS FOR TALKING TO A BOY ABOUT ABUSE

- » Encourage him to talk.
- » Don't say, "Don't let someone do this to you." This could make him think that the abuse is his fault. It's not his fault.
- » Let him know that you're listening. Tell him that you care.
- » Don't be judgmental about what happened.
- » Believe him. Chances are he is telling the truth.
- » Don't scare him to get him to open up.
- » Don't lecture him.
- » Explain what is going to happen next. Tell him that you have to tell someone else about what happened. Tell him that they will try to figure out how to help.

TAKE ACTION

If you are worried about a teen’s behavior – whether or not it is on this list – take action.

- » Talk to the teen.
- » Talk to a doctor or other professional.
- » Talk to the teen’s parents – unless you suspect them of abuse.
- » Call 1-800-RI-CHILD if you think there was abuse.

SIGNS OF ABUSE OR OTHER PROBLEMS IN TEENS

There are many signs that a boy could be in real emotional trouble. He may need professional help.

Pay attention to changes in a boy’s behavior. Any behavior that is serious, lasts a while, and/or affects daily activities is a problem.

- EXAMPLES INCLUDE:
- » Problems with sleep (too much or too little)
 - » Problems with appetite
 - » Social withdrawal
 - » Changes in friends
 - » Changes in personality
 - » Not being able to concentrate
 - » Unusual interest in sex
 - » Fear of adults or nervousness around them
 - » Slipping back to an earlier behavior (e.g. bedwetting)
 - » Fearfulness
 - » Constant sadness or hopelessness
 - » Constant worry or need for reassurance
 - » Self-destructive behavior (e.g. head-banging, cutting oneself)
 - » Thoughts or talking about wanting to die or hurt himself;
 - » Frequent injuries (especially unexplained ones)
 - » Use or abuse of alcohol or drugs
 - » Aggressive, violent, or bullying behavior towards others
 - » Cruelty to animals
 - » Playing with matches or lighting fires
 - » Problems in school or a drop in grades
 - » Low self-esteem
 - » Poor hygiene (cleanliness)
 - » Repeated lying
 - » Restlessness, irritability
 - » Loss of interest in hobbies or activities
 - » Inappropriate social behavior

These behaviors may be the result of abuse. They may be caused by mental illness or anxiety problems. They may also be because of alcohol or drug abuse.

For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Child Abuse and Neglect

Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline
RI Department of Children, Youth and Families
1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) (toll free)
www.dcyf.state.ri.us

Prevent Child Abuse RI
401-728-7920
www.preventchildabuse-ri.org

Sexual Assault and Rape

Sexual Assault and Trauma Resource Center of RI
401-421-4100
1-800-494-8100 (24-hour toll-free helpline)
www.satrc.org

Teen Dating Violence and Domestic Violence

RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence
401-467-9940
1-800-494-8100 (24-hour toll-free helpline)
www.ricadv.org
www.ricadv.org/violence.html

Sojourner House
401-861-6191
401-658-4334 (voice/TTY hotline)
www.sojourner-house.org
www.sojourner-house.org/teen.html

ParentLinkRI.org
www.parentlinkri.org

ParentLinkRI.org links parents of pre-teens and teens with parenting skill-building programs and services in Rhode Island. Find out about classes and workshops for parents. Also find out about educational, counseling, and recreational activities and services for kids and families.

Websites

Child Abuse and Neglect

End Child Abuse
www.childabuse.org

End Child Abuse / Coaching Boys into Men
http://endabuse.org/cbim

Bullying

Stop Bullying Now
http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov
http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/indexAdult.asp

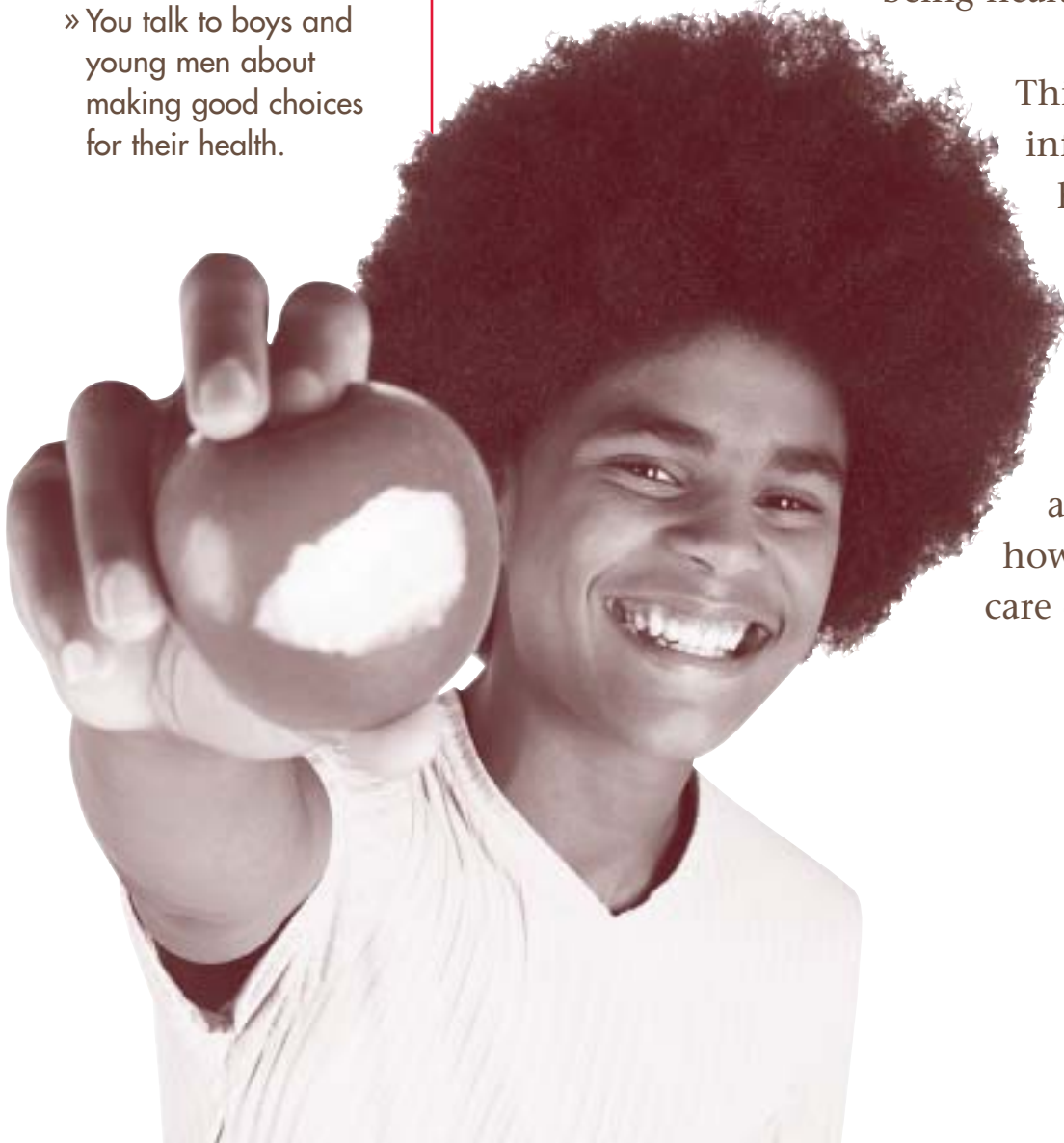
AS A ROLE MODEL...

- » You set an example to boys and young men by making healthy choices.
- » You set an example to boys by your personal cleanliness.
- » You talk to boys and young men about making good choices for their health.

Taking care of your health is important. What you do today has a big effect later on. If you do the right things today, you can live a longer and healthier life.

As a role model, you should tell boys to make healthy choices. You can also set a good example for boys by being healthy and safe yourself.

This section has information on some health issues that people have to deal with. It will help you learn how to take care of these issues for yourself. It will also help you learn how to help teens take care of themselves.



It is Important to Make Good Choices for Your Health

Habits form early on. Once people form habits, it is hard to break them. It is important to learn good health habits early on. These habits can help people live the lives they want, have good relationships, and avoid future health problems.

Below, you will find some information about important health issues. Use this information to explain why being healthy is important. You should also set an example for healthy living to teach boys good health behaviors.

Diet and Exercise

The problem

Obesity (“being fat”) is one of the biggest health problems in the country. It is becoming more common in children and teens.

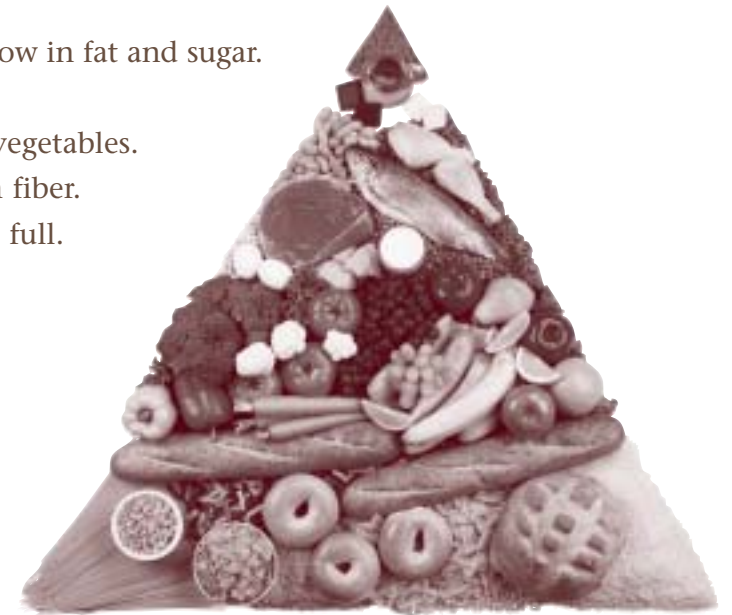
Being overweight or obese can cause:

- » Dangerous diseases, like diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and stroke,
- » Depression, and
- » Low self-esteem.

How to Have a Healthy Weight

A healthy diet is very important.

- » Eat a variety of healthy foods. Eat foods that are low in fat and sugar.
- » Avoid junk food.
- » Try to eat five servings a day of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- » Eat whole grain foods and foods that are high in fiber.
- » Do not eat too much. Stop eating when you feel full.



YEARLY DOCTOR VISITS

One of the most important things adults and teens can do for their health is to see a doctor at least once a year. If lack of health insurance is keeping you from seeing a doctor, call Rite Care at 401-462-5300 (English or Spanish).



Exercise is also very important.

- » Adults: Every day, get 30 minutes to an hour of moderate physical activity – like a brisk walk or yard work. Or do 20 minutes of vigorous exercise, 3 times a week.
- » Children and teens: Every day, get at least an hour of physical activity. This can be moderate or vigorous – like walking, biking, dancing, running, aerobics, or sports.
- » Help boys get exercise by playing a sport with them or taking a walk.

Go to the doctor.

- » A doctor can help keep track of weight and growth. He or she can also give advice for eating right and getting exercise.

Substance Use: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

The Problem

People don’t make good decisions after they drink or use drugs. Sometimes they do dangerous things like drunk driving, having unprotected sex, and getting into fights.

Teens think that bad things won’t happen to them. They don’t realize they can go to jail for using or selling drugs. They don’t realize that in the long-term, alcohol and illegal drugs can cause cancer, brain damage, heart problems, liver or kidney damage, and death.

Most smokers started smoking as teens. The longer a person smokes, the harder it is to quit.

Smoking can cause cancer, heart disease, lung disease, wrinkles, acne, yellow teeth, and impotence. Even “second-hand smoke” can cause asthma, allergies and cancer. It can cause breathing problems in children whose parents smoke.

How to Prevent Substance Abuse

Set a good example to boys.

- » Don’t smoke or use drugs. Use alcohol responsibly. Teens smoke and drink because they see adults doing it and they think that it is an “adult” thing to do.
- » Don’t use alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes as a way to handle problems and stress.
- » Don’t make drinking, drugs, and smoking seem funny or cool to boys.
- » Don’t give alcohol or cigarettes to underage boys.
- » If you smoke or use drugs, try to quit. If a boy is already smoking or using drugs, help him quit. Help is available.

TALK TO BOYS ABOUT DRUGS

- » Explain to boys that bad things can happen because of alcohol and drug abuse. Teens have a hard time seeing how their actions now can cause problems later.
- » Talk about the health problems alcohol or drugs can cause. Talk about legal problems or problems in school.
- » Talk to teens about peer pressure. Help them figure out how to deal with other teens who offer them alcohol or drugs.

FOR HELP QUITTING SMOKING, CALL:

1-800-TRY-TO-STOP
(1-800-879-8678)
or
1-800-8-DEJALO
(1-800-833-5256)
(Spanish)
or
1-800-TDD-1477
(1-800-833-1477)
(Hearing Impaired)

Or visit:
www.trytostop.org

Reproductive Health

(See Section 6 for more information)

ABSTINENCE

Tell boys that condoms and abstinence are the only two birth control methods that protect against both pregnancy and STDs. Abstinence is the only method that is 100% effective against both. Tell boys that they should abstain from oral, anal and vaginal sex.

The Problem

Teens who have sex can get pregnant or get a girl pregnant. They can get a sexually transmitted disease (STD) including HIV/AIDS. Or they could get pregnant AND get an STD.

How to Help Teens Make Good Choices about Sexual Health

Talk to boys about sex, pregnancy, and STDs.

- » Tell boys not to have vaginal, oral, or anal sex.
- » Know the facts about sex, pregnancy and STDs yourself. That way you can answer boys' questions.
- » Tell boys that condoms and abstinence are the only two birth control methods that protect against both pregnancy and STDs. Abstinence is the only method that is 100% effective against both.

- » Boys and men should do monthly self-exams of their testicles. Check for changes or new lumps that could be cancer.

Go to the doctor.

- » See a doctor at least once a year.
- » If you are sexually active, get tested for HIV/AIDS and other STDs.



Mental Health: Depression, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and Eating Disorders

The Problem

Many mental health problems start during childhood or puberty. They are much more common than most people think.

Below are some common mental health problems in children and teens.

1. Depression:

- » People who have depression feel sad, hopeless, helpless, or empty. These feelings last for weeks at a time.
- » Depression gets in the way of doing every day things. It gets in the way of enjoying life.
- » Depression can lead to suicide.

2. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

- » A teen with ADHD has problems paying attention. He may be overly active. He may do things very rashly, on impulse.
- » Having ADHD makes it hard for teens to do their schoolwork.
- » Having ADHD makes it hard to communicate well.

3. Eating disorders:

- » People with eating disorders worry a lot about their body shape or weight. They don't have healthy eating habits.
- » Some people with eating disorders eat little or nothing. Other people eat too much. Some throw up on purpose after they eat.
- » Their bodies don't have the nutrients they need. Eating disorders lead to low energy, weak muscles, ulcers, low blood pressure, not being able to have children, heart attack, seizure, and death.
- » Eating disorders are more common in girls, but boys can have them too.

How to Prevent or Handle Mental Health Problems

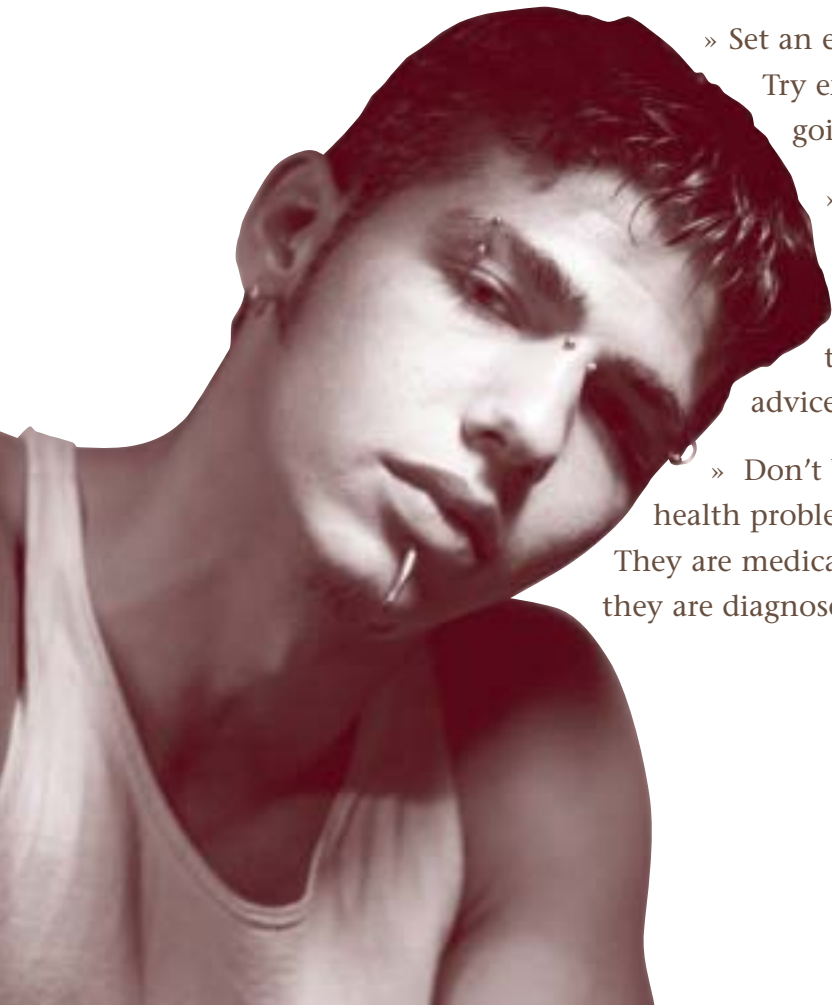
Adults may not be able to prevent all mental health problems in children and teens. But adults can support them and get help for them.

Support boys.

- » All children and teens need love and support. They need it from family, friends, and other adults.
- » Help boys become confident and have high self-esteem. Do this by making them feel loved and wanted.
- » Help boys find a sense of purpose in life. Do this by giving them useful things to do and making them feel needed.
- » Tell boys that you care about them.

Talk to boys.

- » Be aware of the issues in the lives of boys and young men. Talk to them. Listen to them. Be there when they need you.
- » Set an example for healthy ways of dealing with stress. Try exercising, deep breathing, taking up hobbies, or going for walks.
- » If you think a teen has a problem, talk to him about what's going on.
- » If you are not the boy's parent, you might talk to his parents. Talk about the boy's issues. Offer advice on how to get help for him.
- » Don't be afraid to get him professional help. Mental health problems are not the fault of the person who has them. They are medical illnesses. Most of them are treatable. The sooner they are diagnosed, the better.



Safety

The Problem

Car crashes and guns are the two leading causes of death for teens between the ages of 15 to 19.

A lot of teens don't use safety belts. Many drive too fast. Some drive after drinking, or ride with a driver who has been drinking.

Teen boys who commit suicide usually use guns. In most cases, the guns come from the home of the victim, a relative, or a friend.

How to Prevent Accidents

Set a safe example for boys.

- » If you keep a gun in the house, lock it up. Children should not be able to get the key. Always keep the gun unloaded. Check before cleaning it.
- » Drive safely and wear a seatbelt yourself. Insist that everyone in the car wears a seatbelt, too.
- » Never drink and drive. If you drink away from home – even a little – ask someone who did not drink for a ride home. In a group, have a designated driver for the evening.

TALK TO BOYS ABOUT SAFETY

Tell them to:

- » Wear a seat belt and drive safely. Don't speed, even if they are late getting home.
- » Never drink and drive. Never get in a car with someone who has been drinking, either, even if it is their parent.
- » Always wear helmets and other safety gear when biking, skateboarding, or playing contact sports.

Personal Cleanliness (Hygiene)

The Problem

Good hygiene helps prevent disease and infections. Washing with soap and water prevents body odor. It also helps kills bacteria.

How to Be Clean

- » Wash hands as often as possible, especially after going to the bathroom and before eating. Use plenty of hot water and soap.
- » Take a shower every day and use deodorant to prevent body odor. Do this for your own self-confidence. And do it out of respect for others.
- » Wash clothing and clean your living areas regularly.
- » Brush your teeth well at least twice a day and floss daily. This helps prevent tooth decay and bad breath.
- » See a dentist twice a year.

TALK TO BOYS ABOUT BEING CLEAN

- » Good habits start early. Make sure they know how to be clean.
- » Tell them it will help them feel good about themselves.
- » Tell them it will help them fit in with others.



For More Information

Use the following resources (websites, information lines, and programs) to get more information or to get help for a boy.

Rhode Island Resources

Access to Care / Health Insurance

Rlte Care / Rlte Share
RI Department of Human Services
401-462-5300 (English or Spanish)
401-462-3363 (TTY)
www.dhs.state.ri.us/dhs/famchild/shcare.htm

Rhode Island Department of Health,
Office of Primary Care
401-222-1171
www.healthri.org/disease/primarycare/consumers.htm
Get information on health insurance, getting a doctor and community health centers.

CODAC, Inc. – CODAC III (Drug Free and Alcohol Counseling)
401-846-4050, 800-238-8585 (toll free in RI)
Newport
Provides comprehensive methadone treatment services, outpatient detoxification and maintenance; drug free counseling, prevention and outreach; and domestic violence services.

Diet and Exercise

Kids First
401-751-4503
www.kidsfirstri.org

Alcohol and Drugs

CODAC, Inc. – CODAC East Bay
401-434-4999, E. Providence
Provides comprehensive methadone treatment services, outpatient detoxification and maintenance; drug free counseling, prevention and outreach; and domestic violence services.

CODAC, Inc. – CODAC I
401-461-5056, Cranston
Provides outpatient alcohol and drug-free counseling and domestic violence services.

CODAC, Inc. – CODAC II (Methadone Maintenance)
401-942-1450, Providence
Provides outpatient alcohol and drug-free counseling; outpatient detoxification; and domestic violence services.

Tobacco

Try to Stop
1-800-TRY-TO-STOP (1-800-879-8678)
1-800-8-DEJALO (1-800-833-5256) (Spanish)
1-800-TDD-1477 (1-800-833-1477) (Hearing impaired)
www.trytostop.org

Mental Health

Samaritans of Rhode Island
401-272-4044 (Crisis Hotline/Listening Line)
1-800-365-4044 (Crisis Hotline/Listening Line) (toll free – in RI only)
www.samaritansri.org

(continued on next page)

For More Information (continued)

Websites

Alcohol and Drugs

National Youth Anti-drug Media Campaign
www.theantidrug.com
www.laantidroga.com (Spanish)
www.druganswer.com (Asian languages)

Diet and Exercise

VERB (for teens)
www.verbnow.com

President’s Council on Physical Fitness & Sports
www.fitness.gov

5 A Day (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5ADay

Health Information for Parents

Nemours Foundation, KidsHealth
www.kidshealth.org/parent

Bright Futures, “Family Tip Sheets: Adolescence”
www.brightfutures.org/TipSheets/pdf/ad_color.pdf

Health Information for Teens

Nemours Foundation, TeensHealth
www.kidshealth.org/teen

Mental Health

Family Guide to Keeping youth Mentally Healthy & Drug Free
www.family.samhsa.gov

Reproductive Health

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
www.teenpregnancy.org
www.teenpregnancy.org/parent
www.teenpregnancy.org/teen

Note: Refer to page 42 for resources on Reproductive Health.

Safety

SafeUSA
www.safeusa.org

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
www.safeyouth.org

Tobacco

The Truth (American Legacy Foundation)
www.thetruth.com